

Abstract

In protecting Flash memory data, a flexible system and method provides for different levels of protection. It offers the ability to dynamically lock a sector of memory using a dynamic protection bit in volatile memory. It offers persistent locking of a sector using a non-volatile bit in memory and locking this status using a lock bit in volatile memory. It offers yet further protection by including a password mode which requires a password to clear the lock bit. The password is located in an unreadable, one time programmable area of the memory. The memory also includes areas, whose protection state is controlled by an input signal, for storing boot code in a protected manner.